OBAFEMI AWOLOWO
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PATH ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES AND LECTURERS' USE OF PEDAGOGIC STRATEGIES IN ECONOMICS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

BY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my Father – Almighty God; my Lord and Saviour – Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and my Teacher and Comforter – the Holy Spirit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	MEANING
1. MB	Mathematics Background
2. SB	Science Background
3. LB	Language Background
4. SSex	Students' Sex
5. SES	Socio-economic Status
6. SE	Self Esteem
7. CTA	Critical Thinking Ability
8. SH	Study Habit
9. LS	Learning Style
10. CS	Cognitive Style
11. ST	School Type
12. LQ	Lecturers' Qualification
13. MT	Method of Teaching
14. PS	Pedagogical Strategies
15. LSex	Lecturers' Sex
16. IM	Instructional Materials
17. S	Significant
18. NS	Not Significant
19. Questionnaire on Students' Socio-economic Status	QSES
20. Adapted Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory	ACSEI
21. Adapted Cornell Critical Thinking Test	ACCTT

ABBREVIATION	MEANING
22. Adapted Hazard and Nadeau Study Habits Inventory	AHNSHI
23. Memletics Learning Style Inventory	MLSI
24. Martin Cognitive-style Inventory	MCI
25. Questionnaire on Students' Attitude to Economics	QSAE
26. Observation Inventory for Lecturers' Pedagogic Strategies and Materials	OILPSM

ABSTRACT

This study analysed the strength of the pathways among some explanatory variables (student, environmental and teacher factors); and undergraduate students' performance in Economics; determined the strength of the pathways among the explanatory variables and undergraduate students' attitude to Economics; analysed variables with significant direct and indirect influence on undergraduate students' performance in Economics; identified variables with significant direct and indirect influence on undergraduate students' attitude to Economics; and determined variables influencing lecturers' use of pedagogic strategies in Economics. These were with a view to examining factors influencing undergraduate Economics students' learning outcomes and lecturers' use of pedagogic strategies, using path analysis.

The ex- post facto research design was used for this study. The population for the study consisted of the undergraduate Economics students and their lecturers in public universities located in the six states of southwestern Nigeria. Of the 15 public universities in the six states of southwestern Nigeria (seven federal and eight state universities), four universities comprising two federal universities and two state universities were sampled using federal/state stratification. From each of these four universities, 50 undergraduates at 400 level were selected by convenient sampling to make up a study sample of 200 students. All the available sixty-two lecturers in the Economics Department of the selected universities were also used for the study. Eight instruments were used namely: Questionnaire on Students' Socio-economic Status (QSES), Adapted Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (ACSEI), Adapted Cornell Critical Thinking Test

(ACCTT), Adapted Hazard and Nadeau Study Habits Inventory (AHNSHI), Memletics Learning Style Inventory (MLSI), Martin Cognitive-style Inventory (MCI), Questionnaire on Students' Attitude to Economics (QSAE) and Observation Inventory for Lecturers' Pedagogic Strategies and Materials (OILPSM). QSES was used to collect data on students' demographic characteristics and socio-economic status; ACSEI was used to collect data on students' self-esteem; ACCTT was used to collect data on students' critical thinking ability; AHNSHI was used to collect data on students' study habits; MLSI was used to collect data on students' learning style; MCSI was used to collect data on students' cognitive style; QSAE was used to collect data on students' attitude to Economics; OILPSM was used as a guide for observing lecturers' use of pedagogic strategies and choice of instructional materials; and for collecting data on lecturers' qualifications

Results showed that the strengths of 33 out of 80 pathways among the explanatory variables and undergraduate students' performance in Economics were significant ($0.097 \leq \beta \leq 0.903$, $\rho < 0.05$); strengths of 30 out of 80 pathways among the explanatory variables and undergraduate students' attitude to Economics were significant ($0.109 < \beta < 0.905$, $\rho < 0.05$); variables with significant direct and indirect influence on undergraduate students' performance in Economics were school type ($\beta = 0.507$, $\rho < 0.05$), mathematics background ($\beta = -0.393$, $\rho < 0.05$), cognitive style ($\beta = 0.219$, $\rho < 0.05$), study habits ($\beta = 0.196$, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' qualification ($\beta = -0.139$, $\rho < 0.05$), pedagogic strategies ($\beta = 0.369$, $\rho < 0.05$), method of teaching ($\beta = -0.417$, $\rho < 0.05$) and instructional materials ($\beta = -0.273$, $\rho < 0.05$); and students' sex ($\beta = 0.063$, $\rho < 0.05$), school type ($\beta = 0.008$, $\rho < 0.05$), language background ($\beta = -0.016$, $\rho < 0.05$), mathematics background ($\beta = 0.010$, $\rho < 0.05$), science background ($\beta = 0.017$, $\rho < 0.05$), self-esteem ($\beta = 0.068$, $\rho < 0.05$), cognitive style ($\beta = 0.045$, $\rho < 0.05$), learning style ($\beta =$

0.040, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' sex ($\beta = 0.110$, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' qualification ($\beta = 0.087$, $\rho < 0.05$), pedagogic strategies ($\beta = -0.091$, $\rho < 0.05$) and method of teaching ($\beta = 0.036$, $\rho < 0.05$); and variables with significant direct and indirect influence on undergraduate students' attitude to Economics were language background ($\beta = 0.277$, $\rho < 0.05$), self-esteem ($\beta = 0.120$, $\rho < 0.05$), cognitive style ($\beta = 0.508$, $\rho < 0.05$), study habits ($\beta = 0.209$, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' sex ($\beta = -0.150$, $\rho < 0.05$) and instructional materials ($\beta = 0.367$, $\rho < 0.05$); and students' sex ($\beta = 0.001$, $\rho < 0.05$), school type ($\beta = 0.003$, $\rho < 0.05$), socio-economic status ($\beta = 0.001$, $\rho < 0.05$), language background ($\beta = -0.013$, $\rho < 0.05$), mathematics background ($\beta = 0.020$, $\rho < 0.05$), science background ($\beta = 0.015$, $\rho < 0.05$), self-esteem ($\beta = 0.101$, $\rho < 0.05$), learning style ($\beta = 0.040$, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' sex ($\beta = -0.003$, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' qualification ($\beta = -0.027$, $\rho < 0.05$), pedagogic strategies ($\beta = 0.107$, $\rho < 0.05$) and method of teaching ($\beta = 0.062$, $\rho < 0.05$). Also, lecturers' sex ($0.017 < \beta < 0.039$, $\rho < 0.05$), school type ($\beta = -0.067$, $\rho < 0.05$), lecturers' qualification ($\beta = -0.008$, $\rho < 0.05$), method of teaching ($0.036 < \beta < 0.477$, $\rho < 0.05$) and instructional materials ($\beta = 0.134$, $\rho < 0.05$) are the variables with significant influence on lecturers' use of pedagogic strategies in Economics.

The study concluded that factors affecting undergraduate students' learning outcomes in Economics and Economics lecturers' use of pedagogic strategies vary in strength and direction of influence. Furthermore undergraduate Economics students' performance and attitude to Economics can be improved by making decisions on planning and executing pedagogic interventions in teaching and learning of Economics based on the varying strengths and directions of influence of significant explanatory variables on undergraduate students' performance in and attitude to Economics. Also undergraduate Economics learning outcomes

and Economics lecturers' use of pedagogic strategies can be planned, predicted and explained based on the models built by the study.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Economic problems such as unemployment, inflation, poverty, deficit and low standard of living are inherent problems of human beings. Economists study and try to explain these and many other social, political and environmental problems that have important economic consequences by collecting and analysing relevant data. Economic analyses provide insights into individual and aggregate behaviour as relationships between innumerable ends and scarce means, which have alternative uses. The limited nature or scarcity of resources necessitates the study of Economics. Resources are considered scarce because of the tendency of various economic units to demand more resources than are available. Scarcity is the basic economic problem therefore available resources must be used efficiently. Economicsstudies and explains how individuals, households, firms and governments allocate limited or scarce resources, which have alternative uses to satisfy unlimited wants (Robbins in Jhingan, 2011; Queen's University Department of Economics, 2014; Vassar College Department of Economics, 2014). Ultimately, the study of Economics should help improve individual and societal living conditions. Effective teaching of Economics is a gateway to a country's attainment of economic greatness.

Even though Economics is offered at different levels of education in Nigeria, its greatest impact is seen at the tertiary level as observed in the objectives of Economics curricula for tertiary institutions. At the tertiary level, the study of Economics was designed to train students not only to be familiar with conventional economic theories but also to be conscious of the limitations of the theories

as they relate to economic development in a setting like Nigeria; develop analytic skills in students for designing and formulating economic policies which are of social relevance; and produce economists who are thoroughly familiar with the Nigerian economic scene and its relation to the international economic environment.

Others are to: develop students' critical judgment, ability to observe, understand, analyze and synthesize data on socio-economic problems; provide appropriate environment that will enable the students to raise their level of creativity and promote the spirit of self-reliance; stimulate students to be able to observe, understand and critically analyze data on the multifarious socio-economic problems of the world and Nigeria in particular, so as to effectively contribute objectively to solving the problems; and create a desirable milieu for positive behavioural changes which will enable students develop values like hard work, probity, discipline, creativity and self-reliance, dedication and patriotism essential to fulfilling Nigeria's national development objectives thereby producing graduates who can easily fit into several fields of human endeavour in both the public and private sectors (Adekunle Ajasin University Department of Economics, 2014; Ambrose Ali University Department of Economics, 2014; Obafemi Awolowo University Department of Economics, 2014; University of Nigeria Department of Economics; 2014).

The objectives of teaching Economics at the university level are based on Nigeria's philosophy of education which believes that there is need for functional education (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2008). Furthermore, the objectives are founded on some of the goals of tertiary education as stipulated by the National Policy of Education (NPE) (FRN, 2008). Such goals includebut are not limited to contributing to national development through high level relevant manpower training; developing and inculcating proper values for the survival of the individual and society; and developing the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and

external environments. Others are acquiring both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; and promotingnational and international understanding and interaction.

Although Economics attracts many students at the university level, Economics curriculum objectives at the university level have not been well achieved, and students' performance is not as good as expected, as indicated by studies such as Dolado and Morales (2009); Olayiwola, Oyenuga, Oyekunle, Olajide and Agboluaje (2011); Orlov and Roufagalas(2012); and Opstad and Fallan (2014). Effective implementation of undergraduate Economics curricula should lead to the achievement of learning outcomes which would help realize the undergraduate Economics curricula objectives thus ensuring the improvement of individual and societal living conditions in Nigeria. Achieved learning outcomes i.e. learners' achievements are measured after exposing learners to the implementation of a curriculum usually through the teaching/learning process. This implies that undergraduate Economics curriculum objectives should be achieved if effective pedagogic strategies are used in Economics teaching and learning at the tertiary level. Pedagogic strategies are the knowledge, skills and values a teacher needs to possess and command in order to effectively justify, make, implement, evaluate and improve on the many different kinds of decisions that make teaching effective. The use of effective pedagogic strategies can help ensure desired results of teaching – achievement of curriculum objectives (Brown & McIntyre; and Shulman in Cogill, 2008).

Achieved learning outcomes have been classified by Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill and Krathwohl (1956) into three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Cognitive learning outcomes are demonstrated by knowledge recall and intellectual skills; psychomotor learning outcomes are demonstrated by physical skills while affective learning outcomes are demonstrated by feelings and attitude. Gagne (1985) also provided a classification of learning

outcomes similar to those developed by Bloom et al (1956). Gagne identified five categories of learning outcomes: (1) intellectual skills, (2) cognitive strategies, (3) verbal information, (4) motor skills, and (5) attitudes.

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